

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

(e) and (f) A revival plan was submitted by the HPF Officers Association to Operating Agency (ICICI). This was discussed by BIFR in its meeting held on 26.6.97 and was not found viable.

#### **Mahila Pradhan Kshetriya Yojna**

667. SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Mahila Pradhan Kshetriya Bachat Yojna (Women Oriented Regional Savings Scheme) is effective since April, 1974 in National Saving Organisation under his Ministry;

(b) if so, whether the uniform rules and procedures are followed under the said scheme throughout the country;

(c) if so, whether different rules have been framed for the important works such as appointment of agents, supply of S.L.A.A. S-5 and Commission papers etc. under Women oriented Regional Savings Scheme in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh and other States;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether the Government propose to provide the said scheme throughout the country under uniform rules and procedure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): The Mahila Pradhan Kshetriya Bachat Yojna (MPKBY) was introduced from April, 1972.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Yes, Sir. The Government propose to continue to operate the said Scheme throughout the country with uniform rules and procedures.

#### **Customs Duty on Telecom Equipment**

668. SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have recently imposed customs duties on Telecom equipment;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether his Ministry had received any communication for special concession including deemed status to the domestic Manufacturing Industry from the Department of Telecommunication;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the submission of that Department was taken into consideration before imposing the customs duties on telecom equipments; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) Government have reduced basic customs duty on specified telecom equipment to 20% and have exempted them from additional duty of customs, vide notification 51/97-Cus. dated 2.6.97. The concessional duty benefits are available if such equipments are imported by persons licensed by Department of Telecommunications for the purpose of providing basic telecom service, cellular mobile service, paging service and value added services.

(c) to (f) Finance Ministry had received recommendations from Department of Telecommunication (DOT) that concessional customs duty may be provided to only those equipment which are currently not manufactured indigenously and that customs duty on raw materials/components required for the manufacture of such equipment should also be reduced to zero in order to encourage their local manufacture. Alternatively, indigenously manufactured equipment may be exempted from excise duty and deemed export status may be given to indigenous equipment manufacturers. Further, facility of concessional customs duty may be given only to those companies which have been duly licensed by DOT.

These recommendations were taken into consideration. Accordingly, basic customs duty on specified telecom equipment listed in notification 51/97-Cus. dated 2.6.97 was reduced to 20%. These equipments were also exempted from additional duty of customs. Request for reduction of customs duties on raw materials/components of telecom equipment specified in the aforementioned notification is under consideration.

#### **Industrial Corridor in Andhra Pradesh**

669. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

SHRI SUBRAHMANYAM NELAVALA:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to develop Vishakhapatnam-Kakinada as an "Industrial Corridor";

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any arrangements are being made to supply 15 mgd water from the Yeleru canal and uninterrupted power to the Industries;

(d) whether an Industrial Park is also being developed at Pravada on an area of 3,500 acres for creation of infrastructure;

(e) whether any concrete programme of action has